

Trick or Teeth

Candy is abundantly stocked on the supermarket shelves this season. Can't you just hear your mother saying, "All that candy will rot your teeth!" Maintaining good oral health may seem tricky sometimes. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offer the following ways you and your family can maintain good oral health:

- 🦷 Prevent the gum disease gingivitis with thorough tooth brushing and flossing to remove dental plaque.
- 🦷 Drink fluoridated water and use fluoride toothpaste to protect against tooth decay.
- 🦷 Avoid using tobacco in any form. Using tobacco increases your risk of gum disease, oral cancer, throat cancer and oral fungal infection (candidiasis).
- 🦷 Decrease your risk for oral and throat cancers by limiting alcohol intake.
- 🦷 Avoid sugary and starchy snacks and snack less often throughout the day.
- 🦷 Stimulate salivary flow by eating the recommended five servings-a-day of fiber-rich fruits and vegetables to help in the remineralization of tooth surfaces with early stages of tooth decay.
- 🦷 Visit your dentist and have professional tooth cleanings regularly to catch oral health problems for treatment and to prevent future problems from occurring.
- 🦷 If you are diabetic, maintaining control of the disease decreases your risk of gum disease.
- 🦷 If you experience dry mouth from medications, discuss with your doctor other drugs that may be substituted. If you can't avoid dry mouth, drink plenty of water, chew sugarless gum, and avoid tobacco and alcohol.
- 🦷 Get an oral check-up before starting cancer treatment. Treatments such as radiation to the head or neck and/or chemotherapy may cause oral health problems. By treating existing oral health problems before cancer therapy you may prevent or limit oral complications or tissue damage.

Prayer: *Thank you God, for giving us the gift of make believe and laughter, this fall season. Help us to be mindful of our smiles and our teeth as an expression of your care and on-going love for us. Amen.*

For more information visit:

www.cdc.gov (search 'oral health')

www.ada.org – American Dental Association